A Bleeker Esq

THE PASTIME.

(A LITERARY PAPER.)

THE FIRST NUMBER OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

Schenectady, Saturday, May 14, 1808.

TO OUR PATRONS.

THE Editor's indisposition has delayed the appearance of the Pastime. He now resumes his work with all the cheeriness of health. He thanks his friends for the aid they have already given him, and acknowledges, with gratitude, a munificence of patronage, exceeding his most sanguine expectations.

The Editor will vouch for his individual exertions to deserve that patronage. He has the promise of able assistance; and he hopes his friends will not give him cause to credit the assertion, that literary men are too capricious and volatile to keep their promises.

There will be no alteration in the prominent principles of the Pastime. It will remain consecrated to elegant literature in all its branches. But SAMENESS will be more studiously avoided than it has been. A Belles Lettres Journal should be diversified with all the tints of the Rainbow; like the Iris of Virgil

Trahens mille varios colores,

bearing a thousand various colours; and in all its varieties uniformly beautiful.

The Editor will strive to produce such diversity. He will exert his poor abilities to render the Pastime AMICUS OMNIUM HORARUM, a pleasant companion at all hours. He will endeavour to supply Light Reading for the Gay, and Heavy for the Phlegmatick: that the Grave shall have Morality; the Merry, Mirth; the Student, Metaphysicks; the Ladies, Love and Trifles; and that Poetry shall *lift her enchanting voice to Heaven* for the Bard.

Instruction is not the object of this work. The Editor has not presumption enough to aim at the improvement of readers who are all older and wiser than himself. It is intended for a PASTIME to those who can laugh at the levities of youth. If it chance at any time to brighten one gloomy hour, to chase the spleen or drive away the ennui, he aspires to nothing more. Mankind are not long together in this world, and they should mutually strive to make each other happy. He that plucks the thorns from the path of life, does his fellow-creatures more service than he who strews that path with roses.

All the Editor's promises of the future must be conditional. When Catullus invited his friend to supper he addressed him thus :

Cœnabis bene, mi Fabulle, apud me
Paucis, si tibi Di favent, diebus,
SI TECUM ATTULERIS BONAM ATQUE MAGNAM
CÆNAM. *Catul. Carm.* xiii.

Well shall my friend Fabullus sup with me,
And *soon*, should such be fav'ring Heav'ns decree.
But if the supper's plentiful and rare,
FABULLUS MUST HIMSELF SUPPLY THE FARE.

And thus the Editor must address his friends. If each one brings the dish that best suits him, there cannot be a discontented guest. It is hoped that writers will take the hint, and send Speculations from the Study, and Verses from the Summer House. Let them satirize when cynical; criticise when captious ; and, on rainy days, let them moralize.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

FOR THE PASTIME.

Tollens vacuum plus nimio gloria verticem.
HOR.

OF all the follies which infest the fashionable world, no one is more conspicuous and disagreeable than affectation. Many who might otherwise adorn the circles in which they move, become ridiculous and disgusting, by endeavouring to assume those qualities which nature has denied them. "Affectation, says an eminent author, is always to be distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities, which we might with safety and innocence be known to want." There is scarcely a corner in the various departments of life, that is not crouded with the victims of affectation. Many a fine beau, whose pate is as soft and plastic as the pomatum which covers it, may be heard to speak with such effeminate softness and seen to act with such Frenchified *debonnaire*, as would sicken the heart of a stoic and supercede the prescription of emetics. Many a dull-headed witling, to excite wonder and acquire the credit of genius, will sweat under flannels in the heats of July, and shiver in linen in the blasts of December.

But affectation disgraces not only the tea-table and the circle, where nibbling starvation and mincing modesty insult the understanding; it also enters the departments of science and invades the sphere of intellect. It may often be found to soar upon the pinions of ideal pre-eminence and rest in the clouds of imaginary wisdom. This kind of affectation, so assuming in its nature, and so lofty in its elevation, is the least readily pardoned by the scientific mind. If a lady wishes to be considered as deprived of the ordinary powers of digestion and motivity ; or if a fop would fain appear a monkey, and destitute of that kind of speech and action which stamps the character of manhood, let them take their course, for their folly is their punishment. But when a tribe of dunces arrogate to themselves the powers of criticism, and the prerogatives of genius, whose intellects are gross and fetid as the mud of chaos, though we may laugh at their stupidity, yet we are indignant at their presumption.

A preposterous idea which this kind of literary affectation has generated, is extensively circulated and readily adopted, by all those whose reputation requires them to foster it ; that elegant elocution and profound investigation, can rarely or never exist together. If a clergyman, a lawyer or

a legislator is fluent in his utterance, and elegant in his diction: if graceful in his gestures and persuasive in his manner, it is inferred with all the dogmatical assurance of Johnson that he is of *course* destitute of strength of mind and soundness of understanding. If on the contrary he is dry and inelegant in his style, and dull and uncouth in his utterance, penetration and solidity are immediately tagged to his character. Of a stammering divine it is said, "True, he is no speaker, but he's a very good sort of a man; his knowledge is great though hidden, and his faculties amazingly *deep* and *sound*." They are indeed *deep*, *so deep* that not an idea can be drawn from them;—*sound* too they are, as the barber's block, from which no ray of genius was ever emitted. Of a blundering pettifogger, who can hardly distinguish between a demurrer and a dromedary, it is said, "True he is no high flown orator, but he can *prepare a case well*, and he is *a remarkably* good judge of law;" when for him Mansfield would probably soon be forgotten, and Coke slumber side by side with Hardwicke and Holt, till the cock should crow for the morning of the resurrection.

This affectation of literary taste and discernment, has spread its influence far and wide. Almost every member of society assumes the province of determining with scientific criticism the merits and demerits of every production that meets his eye. Thus one imposition crouds fast upon another, and every ornamental embellishment is shaded with affectation.

R.

For the Pastime.

FORTUNE AND WISDOM.

It has been somewhere remarked, that *fortune maintains a kind of rivalship with wisdom.* The observation of every man of discernment will teach him how far, and under what qualifications, that remark may be adopted as truth. Perhaps the following reflections may throw the matter into a just point of view.

To discover precisely the causes of the different degrees of success which attend the affairs of men, is beyond the reach of human sagacity. There is such a blend of good fortune and good management requisite to maintain a prosperous course in life, that it is impossible to determine to which of them a man is principally to ascribe his prosperity. A great part of what is usually called good luck, among men, is nothing more than the effect of measures dictated by a sound judgment; and a great part of what is denominated bad luck, is merely the result of folly or neglect. The few extraordinary instances, where men are suddenly elevated or depressed by a contingency which their agency did not controul, should neither cherish the hopes of the foolish and indolent, nor damp those of the prudent and industrious.

A prize in a lottery, or the death of a rich friend, may throw a worthless fellow into affluence; but such a circumstance furnishes no argument that Providence usually bestows its blessings where they are not deserved. Nor, on the other hand, where the substance of a diligent man is accidentally destroyed by fire or tempest, can it be inferred that diligence is not ordained in the constitution of nature, as the common road to wealth and distinction. Extraordinary events do not authorize general hopes or fears. There are in the natural world appearances which sometimes work against the usual course of things, but they never defeat the general tendency of the established laws of nature. In the moral world, likewise, we often behold occurrences that seem to contradict the idea that Providence regulates the affairs of men by a well-ordered economy, that depends for its success principally on human agency.

That kind of rivalship which fortune maintains with wisdom, should operate upon men so as to stimulate their efforts and improve their circumspection. The lucky contingencies,

which render the progress of some men so smooth and prosperous, are owing, more than is commonly supposed, to just calculations and persevering application. It is true that many turns of good and ill fortune occur where the effect of personal agency is not visible, and where chance seems wholly to predominate ; but these appearances should only lead us to suspect that we cannot discern the connection between causes that are hidden and those that are obvious. The chain of events is connected in such a manner, that we can never know precisely how the power operates which binds or separates the links. We can however distinguish enough to satisfy a reasonable mind, that, in the ordinary run of affairs, happiness is united with virtue, and interest is promoted by an attention to duty.

F.

HISTORY OF LITERATURE.

[We translate this singular article of Biography from a late French Journal. We were interested by the story; and present it to our readers because it is novel and eccentric.]

For the Pastime.

NOTICE OF GILBERT,

A FRENCH POET.

Nicholas-Joseph-Laurent Gilbert, was born at Fontenay, near Bairns, Lorraine, in 1751, and died at *L'Hotel Dieu*, Paris, Nov. 16, 1780.

In 1772, he published a collection of poetical pieces, entitled *Debut Poetique*, a work of much talent, and frequently enlivened by flashes of wit.

He afterwards produced several odes ; and two satires, *The Eighteenth Century and My Apology*, whose uncommon merit fulfilled the hopes which had been conceived of his genius.

Gilbert had been early taught to detest the popular writers, the French Philosophers, of his time. In his Satires he sought, from the purest motives, to propagate these sentiments of abhorrence. This drew upon him an host of enemies, who exerted themselves to ruin his fame and fortune. Gilbert was poor ; he considered himself unjustly persecuted ; he abandoned society, turned fanatick, and eventually became mad. But with his reason, his miseries did not cease ; for he thought himself pursued by his enemies to the Infernal Regions, and saw nothing but spectres, devils, and all the flames of hell. Pensioned by M. de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, he went one day into that prelate's closet, and gazing on him with all the wildness of despair, exclaimed in the sepulchral tone of a monk of St. Bruno : *I am damned.* The Archbishop, terrified, thrust the maniac out of doors and ordered his servants to conduct him to *L'Hotel Dieu*, a mad-house, where they were forced to confine him. There he imagined that *the rascally philosophers* were enamoured of *the sparkling eyes of his strong box ;* and to secure his property from them, he swallowed the key, which lodged in the tendons of the œsophagus : but he survived this act of madness five weeks. In the frenzy of delirium, he frequently pointed to the place where the key lodged, putting his hand to his neck ; but the gesture was not understood, nor did the cause of his decease appear, until the body was opened after death.

Gilbert died at the age of 29 years and some months. Eight days before he sunk under this excruciating agony, he composed a poem, terminating with the following stanzas, which breathe the sweetest sensibility.

Au banquet de la vie, infortuné convive,
J'apparus un jour, et je meurs.
Je meurs, et sur la tombe, oū lentement j'arrive,
Nul ne viendra verser des pleurs.

Adieu champs que j'aimai ! et toi, douce verdure !
Et vous, riant exils des bois !

Ciel! pavillon de l'homme! admirable nature!
Adieu! pour la derniere fois!

Ah! puissent voir long-tems votre beauté sacrèe,
Tant d'amis sourds a mes adieux!
Qu'ils meurent pleins de jours! que leur mort soit pleurèe!
Qu'un ami leur ferme les yeux!

A HASTY AND LITERAL TRANSLATION.

At the banquet of life, an unfortunate guest,
I appeared one day; and I die.
I die, and over the tomb where I slowly arrive
No one will come to weep.

Adieu, plains that I have loved! sweet verdure, adieu!
And ye sportive exiles of the wood!
Sky! Canopy of Man! admirable nature!
Adieu for the last time!

Oh long may the friends now deaf to my adieus,
Behold your sacred beauties!
May they die full of years! May their death be wept!
May a friend close their eyes!

[By the politeness of a friend who has obliged us with a file of the latest French Papers, we are enabled to make the following translations.]

Paris, Nov. 30, 1807.

M. David has been directed by his Majesty, the Emperor, to execute two grand pictures representing the principal ceremonies of the coronation. This celebrated artist has just finished the first of these pictures: it is thirty-five feet long, and represents the moment when His Majesty, the Emperor, before the high altar of *Notre Dame*, goes to place the crown on the head of the Empress. All the figures (exceeding an hundred) are perfect likenesses, and the costumes observed with the utmost fidelity.

December 1.

Her Majesty, the Empress, went on the day before yesterday, to view M. David's picture of the coronation. The Dukes of Mecklenburg and Coburg, with other strangers of distinction, have also been to admire this painting.

The ancient Academy of Sciences, Inscriptions and Belles Lettres of Toulouse, has just been re-established by virtue of a resolution of Government. It is governed by the ancient rules, with the exception of a few indispensible additions and modifications. The institution was opened on the 22d instant, in one of the grand halls of the capital; all the authorities being invited to assist at the ceremony.

The commission of the schools of the grand duchy of Wourtzbourg, have published, under date of October 30, 1807, an official report of the produce of the *Schools of Industry*, during the year 1806. Among 26,242 children who frequent the public schools of the grand duchy, there were 5626 boys and 8650 girls, who, at the same time, attended those called *Schools of Industry*. The work which these children have done, is valued at the sum of 29,567 *florins du Rhin*.* The branches of industry in which they have been exercised, all relate to rural and domestic economy. Thus, gardening, planting of fruit trees, keeping bees, the cure of wax and honey, knitting, the sewing and spinning of silk, wool and flax, have occupied the first rank of their useful studies; nor have they neglected other little trades which are useful in the country, such as that of making straw hats, thread, crab-nets, spinning wheels, wooden clocks, and other things which our refined citizens disdain, but which, in many places, contribute to the happiness and ease of the inhabitants of the country.

November 18.

M. Delangle, author of a voyage to Spain, died at Paris, the last of October, in a situation bordering on penury.

M. Mercier, of the Institute, yesterday established the *antipode* of Dr. Gall. The former pretends to find the index of our faculties and inclinations in the protuberances of the head.

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* *A German florin is worth* 2*s.* 4*d. st.*

M. Mercier is far from believing this; he insists that this index exists in the form of the *foot*, and he has just published a pamphlet to establish the position!!

We learn from Constantinople, that the Sultan Mustapha, has just sent the Emperor Napoleon six Arabian Horses, as remarkable for their beauty, as for the magnificence of their trappings. To give some idea of the value of this gift, it is sufficient to say, that one of the cloths is embrodered with diamonds and pearls, and another with colored stones.

In the course of the year 1806, 83,833 children were vaccinated in Gallicia.

His Majesty, the Emperor, has demanded from the different classes of the Institute, a general picture of the state of letters and sciences in France, from 1789, until the present moment. When this work is completed it will be extremely curious and interesting.

VARIETY.

How to make the best of it.

Robinet, a peasant of Lorraine, after a hard day's work at the next market town, was returning home with his basket in his hand. What a delicious supper shall I have? (said he to himself.) This piece of kid well stewed down, with onions sliced, thickened with meal, and seasoned with my salt and pepper, will make a dish fit for the bishop of a diocese. Then I have a good piece of barly loaf at home to finish with. How I long to be at it!

A noise in the hedge now attracted his notice. He spied a squirrel nimbly running up a tree, and popping into a hole between the branches. Ha! (thought he) what a nice present a nest of young squirrels will be to my master! I'll try if I can get it. Upon this, he set down his basket in the road, and began to climb up the tree. He had half ascended, when casting a look at his basket, he saw a dog with his nose in it, ferretting out a peice of kid's flesh. He made all possible speed down, but the dog was too quick for him, and ran off with the meat in his mouth.—Robinet looked after him—Well then (said he) then I must be content with soup meagre—and no bad thing neither.

He travelled on, and came to a little public house by the road side, where an acquaintance of his was sitting on a bench, drinking. He invited Robinet to take a draught. Robinet seated himself by his friend, and set his basket on the bench close by him. A tame raven which was kept in the house, came slily behind him, and stole away the bag in which the meal was tied up, and hopped off with it into his hole. Robinet did not perceive the theft until he had got on his way again. He returned to search for his bag, but he could hear no tidings of it.—Well, says he, my soup will be the thinner, but I will boil a slice of bread in it, and that will do some good at least.

He went on again, and arrived at a little brook, over which was laid a narrow plank. A young woman coming up to pass at the same time, Robinet gallantly offered her his hand. As soon as she had got to the middle, either through fear or sport, she shrieked out and cried she was falling. Robinet hastening to support her with his other hand, let his basket drop into the stream. As soon as she was safe over he jumped in and recovered it, but when he took it out he perceived that all his salt was melted, and his pepper washed away. Nothing now was left but the onions.—Well! says Robinet, then I must sup to night on roasted onions and barley bread. Last night I had the bread alone. Tomorrow morning it will not signify what I had. So saying he trudged on, singing as before.

—

Some years ago a mountebank at Paris had bills of a monstrous size posted up in every corner of the metropolis, setting forth that on such a day he would exhibit the black gentleman the DEVIL—admittance *un petit ceu*, half a crown each person. A vast concourse of people, and especially of ladies, flocked to the diabolical exhibition, when the French Katterfelto made his appearance in deep mourning, on a high scaffold. After various profesional grimaces, he pulled out an *empty purse*, and pointing to it exclaimed in a roaring tone, *c'est le diable, Messieurs!* —There is the devil, gentlemen!

—

An illiterate person, in the prison of this town, the other day, asked whether Johnson's Lives of the Poets (which were before him) was *a true history*—he was answered that there was no reason to doubt the veracity of the biographer. Why, said he, in the life of Blackmore, who wrote an elegant Poem on the *Creation of the World*, I observe in Johnson's words, that "before his *Creation* he wrote three Books *on the Nature of Man*."

The Ladies' New Catechism.

Ques. For what end did you come into the world?

A. To get a husband.

Q. What is the way to get a husband?

A. To dress, dance, chat, play, and go to all manner of public places, except church, for fear of being called a fanatic.

Q. What is the duty of a husband?

A. To please his wife.

Q. What is the duty of a wife?

A. To please herself.

Q. Are there no more duties incumbent on you as a fine lady?

A. Yes; I must be deaf, dumb and blind, as occasion requires; deaf to the voice of duns, and all such poor relations as most easily beset me; dumb when my husband remonstrates; and blind to the whole race of city acquaintance or country cousins.

—

IMPROMPTU,

Written in 1793, on hearing the GUILLOTINE termed the "*French National Razor.*"

If this fam'd AXE, by Democratic ravers,
Be styl'd a "RAZOR," *heads*, not *beards*, to lop;
The *French Convention*, surely are the SHAVERS,
And *mighty* PARIS but—*a Barber's Shop.*

—

[These Epigrams were both written by Doctor Goldsmith; and we select them from a recent and rare edition of his works, containing many things which were never before collected.]

On a beautiful boy and girl who had both been deprived of one eye, by lightning.

Imitated from the Spanish.

Lumine Acon dextro capta est Leonida sinistro,
Et poterat forma vincere uterque Deos.
Parva puer, lumen quod habes concede puellæ;
Sic *tu* CÆCUS AMOR, sic erit *illa* VENUS.

—

ON A BEAUTIFUL YOUTH,
Struck blind by lightning.

Sure 'twas by Providence design'd,
Rather in pity, than in hate,
That he should be, like Cupid, blind,
To save him from Narcissus' fate.

—

The pungent Peter Pindar, has thus "hitched into rhyme," West's celebrated picture of Adam and Eve:

Adam and Eve, their fate how odd,
Ah! very odd must be confess'd;
Turn'd out of Paradise by God,
And murder'd afterwards by West.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

[We regret, in presenting this lively Epilogue to our readers, that we cannot impart the effect, which, exclusive of its uncommon merit, it derives from the arch and *piquante* style in which Mrs. Stanley recites it.]

For the Pastime.

EPILOGUE TO THE SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER, AS SPOKEN BY MRS. STANLEY:

Essentially varied from the original,

BY ROBERT TREAT PAINE, Jr. Esq.

BEFORE the fatal knot is fairly tied;
Before I change the WIDOW for the BRIDE;
Once more at this tribunal I appear,
A *Soldier's Daughter* and a *Volunteer.*
Such am *I now*—tho' not by *martial* laws,
I VOLUNTEER *it*—in my *sex's* cause.
Ladies! I one proposal fain would make
And trust you'll hear it for your *Country's* sake.
While *glory* animates each *manly* nerve,
Shall gentle *Woman* from the contest swerve?
No!——
We'll form a *female* army—of RESERVE;
And class them thus:—YOUNG ROMPS are *pioneers;*
WIDOWS, *sharp-shooters*—WIVES are *fuzileers;*
MAIDS are *battalion*—that's—all under twenty,—
And as for *light troops*—we have *those* in *plenty!*
Our smart, gay MILLINERS, all deck'd with *feather,*
Are *corps of infantry*—for *summer weather!*
Our BELLES, who, clad in cap and pantaloons
Shoot as they FLY—shall be our—*light dragoons.*
OLD MAIDS are *spies*—still fond of war's alarms,
They *love* the *camp,* although they *don't bear arms!*
FLIRTS are our van; for they (provoking elves!)
Draw on a battle; but ne'er *fight themselves.*
Our PRUDES shall "*sap and mine;*" well vers'd to feign,
They fear no *danger,* tho' in *ambush* ta'en;
For who'd suspect a *Prude*—*could lay a train?*
GOSSIPS, who *talk* by *rote,* and *kill* by *prattle,*
Shall serve for BULLETINS to every battle.
VIXENS the *trumpet* blow—SCOLDS beat the *drum;*
When *thus* prepar'd, what enemy DARE *come?*
Those eyes, that even *Freemen* could enslave,
Will light a *race of vassals*—to their grave;

So shall th' *artillery* of female charms
Repel invaders, without *force of arms.*
If this succeeds,—as *I* the scheme have plann'd,
I hope, *at least*, the honour of *command.*
Train'd on this field, and disciplin'd by you,
I'm doom'd to pass your—*critical* "REVIEW;"
For ALL RECRUITS are, by the law's direction,—
Women, or *Soldiers*—subject to "*inspection.*"
In *love*, or *arms*, *which* claims the *greater* skill,
EYES that can *rifle*, or CARBINES that *kill?*
Which best displays the tactics of the art,
To *storm* a *city*, or *subdue* a *heart?*
Yet one distinction woman's fate obtains;
—When TOWNS *capitulate*, the VICTOR REIGNS;
The *vassal prisoner* bows him to the stroke,
And owns the *Master* that impos'd the yoke.
But WOMAN—*vanquish'd*—still pursues the strife,
She yields her *freedom*—to become a *wife*,
And thus surrenders—but to RULE FOR LIFE!
A *Parthian* war she wages with her *eyes;*
Routed, she *triumphs*—and *triumphant*, *flies;*—
For NEW campaigns, she *deigns* to be *outdone*,
And *grounds her arms*—to *slaves* her EYES have WON.

Not so the band who till Columbia's soil,
Disdaining peril, and inur'd to toil,
A firm, proud *phalanx*, whose undaunted hand
A *bulwark* rears to guard their *native land;*
And teach invading foes, *that host* to fear,
Which boasts the name of PATRIOT VOLUNTEER.

—What say ye *now?*—If you *approve* my plans,
Receive your *General*—with "*presented fans!*"
Now *brother* soldiers—dare I *sisters* join?
If you this night, your efforts should combine,
To save *our corps* from anxious hope and fear,
And send out *Mercy* as a—*Volunteer*,
To whose white banner should the criticks flock,
Our rallying numbers might *sustain* the shock;
The sword shall drop—then cease impending slaughter—
If *Mercy's* shield protect—the *Soldier's Daughter.*

For the Pastime.

TO MISS * * * * * * * *

ON PARTING FROM THE AUTHOR.

Tho' thy lov'd voice no more I hear
Nor see thy smiles with raptur'd eye,
To me thy charms shall still be dear
And in my thoughts be ever nigh.

In tints no time can e'er efface
Each grace will steal upon my view,
And mem'ry still shall fondly trace
The moments I have past with you.

Dearest Eliza fare thee well—
Be Love and Happiness thy lot;—
My own—I can myself foretell,
It is—to grieve and be forgot.

S. G.

[In "a ramble amongst the tombs," we met with the following, inscribed on a neat marble monument.]

SACRED
To the Memory of
SALLY NOTT,
Daughter of the
REV. JOEL BENEDICT,
and
CONSORT OF E. NOTT,
Minister of the Presbyterian Church, Albany.
She departed this Life,
March 9, 1804,
Aged 29 years and 6 months.
The memory of the just is blessed.

Rest, precious Dust, beneath this mound,
Which the lorn mourner raises here;
Whilst lisping orphanage around,
Pours forth the filial tribute tear.

Can this Dust live? blind nature cries!
The Gospel answers, Yes; it can—
When CHRIST descends, the saints shall rise,
And hail THY Advent, *SON OF MAN.*

Why then indulge the flowing tear—
We check our grief, and kiss the rod,
No more thy triumphs, Death, we fear,
The grave conducts us home to God.

☞ Notices to Correspondents, an Advertisement, and some other articles, are deferred for want of room.

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